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ABSTRACT

This transcript of and guide to a two-cassette course designed to assist Sephardic and Ashkenazi Israeli immigrants in erasure of their foreign accents, by either individual or group study. Narrative and taped demonstrations of American English that pinpoint typical phonological barriers and pronunciation difficulties are outlined. The author's own system of pronunciation symbols is used. (MSE)

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How to Speak Standard American English without a Foreign Accent

Israeli Edition

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By: Jack Catran

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JACK CATRAN

HOW TO SPEAK STANDARD AMERICAN ENGLISH

WITHOUT A FOREIGN ACCENT

A HENRY HIGGINS PRODUCTION

This is not another book on "English for the Foreign Born" or "English as a Second Language"

IT IS

AN INTENSIVE COURSE IN ACCENT ERASURE

A powerful and effective audio-visual tool designed to be used by those millions of new Americans seeking to rid their speech of **FOREIGN ACCENTS**

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ISRAELI EDITION

ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDIC

JACK CATRAN

HOW TO SPEAK STANDARD AMERICAN ENGLISH WITHOUT A FOREIGN ACCENT

A HENRY HIGGINS PRODUCTION

ISRAELI EDITION

Pygmalion Books — *an imprint of*
JADE PUBLICATIONS
Box 5567, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Emma Lazarus
The Statue of Liberty

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INTRODUCTION TO ISRAELI EDITION

There is a wave of immigration sweeping into the United States today, promising to equal, if not surpass, the influx that took place between the turn of the century and World War I. Millions of people, seeking a new way of life, now call the United States their home. And there is no sign that the wave will abate, as conditions appear to worsen the world over.

Yet, during my extensive experience as a specialist in dialect and accent erasure, I have sought vainly for a book or teaching aid specifically designed to help my students from Israel eliminate or reduce their foreign accents. To be sure, there is a vast library of source material covering such subjects as English for the foreign born, English as a second language, and numerous dictionaries of American idioms, but none, to my knowledge, have attacked, or even approached, the problem of dialect erasure.

This book is a pioneer attempt to alleviate that problem. It is written in simple English, and cast in the second person singular. Because it is aimed not only at teachers, but also directly at you, the new American, the text carefully steers clear of the phonetic symbols and "scientific" jargon of the field of linguistics.

The pronunciation symbols are my own, and anyone can understand them after a short period of orientation. One problem remains: a sprinkling of American-English sounds do not exist in a number of foreign languages. For example, the A sound in the words "that", "Jack", and "master" is unknown to the Ashkenazi tongue. For this reason, it becomes necessary for you with Ashkenazi accents to *hear* and learn to mimic the A sound; the inflection, color, and sounds of American-English must be *heard* by those with foreign accents before they can learn to repeat and eventually adopt those characteristics in their everyday speech. The cassettes that accompany the book effectively solve that problem.

The cassettes can be used in workshops, speech clinics, and of course, by you new Americans in the privacy of your own homes. To get the most out of the material, two cassette recorders should be used, one for playing the course cassettes, the other to be used by you to compare your own speech patterns with the demonstration material.

In my effort to be accurate and authentic, I have linguistically divided the Israeli accent into two distinct classes. Class 1 is the accent of the descendents of those Yiddish-speaking Israelis — the Ashkenazis — who were born in Eastern Europe and later emigrated to Israel during or after its establishment. A strong Yiddish-Slavic flavor colors their American-English speech. I have grouped into Class 2 the accent of the descendants of the Arabic-speaking Israelis — the Sephardim — who have lived in what is now

known as Israel long before its establishment, or who have emigrated to Israel from Arabic-speaking countries. The American-English speech of the new generation of Israelis — the Sabras — has been strongly influenced by Class 1 and Class 2 colorings. Because of this two-class variation in the Israeli accent, the course covers both the Eastern European-Yiddish-Ashkenazi influences and the Arabic-Sephardic colorings.

For maximum progress, there can be no substitute for total immersion by you students in American-English. While driving an automobile your radio should be on as much as possible, preferably tuned to programs that feature talk. The same practice should be engaged in at home when viewing television; while, admittedly, you may have to suffer through much idle chatter and inferior program content, we must keep in mind that to obtain our goal with optimum speed, the medium (speech, in this case) should always be considered more important than the message.

There are subtleties in American-English too difficult to communicate in a book. Few Americans, for example, pronounce the word "the" correctly as **THEE**. "To" is rarely pronounced correctly as **TOO**. Rather, for "he went to see the man", Americans tend to say **HEE WENT TUH SEE THUH MAN**. Because you new Americans conscientiously tend to concentrate your efforts on pronouncing each word in a sentence correctly, it is difficult for you, at the beginning, to adopt the American habit of stringing words together without unnaturally stressing such words as "the" and

"to". Where appropriate, and if there is no risk of confusing you, the text and cassettes will clearly present both the stressed and unstressed forms of this class of word.

What is American-English? The United States used to be a country made up of many regional dialects: Boston, New York, Midwest, etc. With the advent of radio, television, and high-speed travel, those localisms are rapidly disappearing. The American-English used as a standard in this course hews as closely as possible to the English spoken by network radio and television announcers. The language is dynamic and flexible, and changes daily. I am confident that the yardstick used in the course will serve you as an effective working model in your quest for mastery of the language.

One final note: the ultimate purpose of the course is to attempt to offer a humble contribution to the noble process of integration that so typifies the cultural history of the United States. The people of the United States are the product of the richest admixture of cultures the civilized world has ever known. If I can help you, new American, to meld into, and further enrich, our heritage, then we are all on our way toward attaining the growth and maturity so desperately required by the world, especially this world of today which is so in need of world citizens.

END OF INTRODUCTION

How to Speak English Without a Foreign Accent

It would have been easy to thicken this book, and lengthen the accompanying cassette, by padding it with high-sounding phrases stressing the importance to your career and social life of learning to use your vocal instrument to speak American-English authoritatively, pleasantly, and correctly.

While the course focuses primarily on *pronunciation,* I am well aware that there are other factors which contribute to the Israeli accent, such as stress and intonation. But I have ignored *stress* and *intonation,* mainly because it is my contention if you could pronounce every word in the English language as educated Americans do, few people would ever notice that your stress and intonation were not quite correct.

Moreover, I could have gone on about the need to motivate yourself to spend hours and hours practicing voice production and accent-free speech. In addition, I could have wasted your valuable time discussing the elements of speech production; respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation; how the airstream is delivered from your lungs through the trachea to your larynx; how the process of articulation works; how language and verbal behavior evolved; etcetera.

But I deliberately avoided that approach. Instead, I shall immediately proceed to teach you how to self-monitor and self-correct your Israeli accent by working with the printed material and the taped demonstrations. I have little doubt that if you set aside the time required for frequent practice periods you will gradually acquire a mastery of the phonetic repertoire of American English sounds — the vowels, consonants, and the diphthongs — along with the inflection and color of the language in your reading, and, more important, in your everyday, spontaneous speech.

Aside from urging you to use two tape recorders — one for listening to the demo tapes, the other for recording your own speech — I can think of no other procedures for you to follow as you progress through the course, reading the lessons to follow and listening to the demo tape.

The Pronunciation Symbols Used in This Course

For our purpose, the English alphabet of 26 letters shall represent roughly 50 classes of sound. The six vowels, **a - e - i - o - u - y,** alone, or in combination, represent 20 vowel and diphthong sounds. The twenty consonants, alone, or in combination, represent 30 sounds.

Note: The symbols listed in the column titled **Our Symbol** shall serve as the alphabet of this course. *You must memorize* the sound of each one before moving on to the lessons ahead. The left hand column lists the symbols used in Webster's 2nd International Dictionary.

VOWELS

Dict Symbol	Our Symbol	Sample Word
ŭ	UH	under, alone
ä	AH	father, hard
ă	A	bad, master
ô	AW	ball, cough
ē	EE	he, feed
ĕ	EH	get, letter
â	a	care, chair
ĭ	i	sit, middle
ŏ	O	pot, proper
o͞o	OO	food, moon
o͝o	oo	look, good
ū	yOO	unit, eulogize
ā	AY (EH-EE)	take, later
ī	I (AH-EE)	ice, might
ō	OH (UH-OO)	bone, phone
û	u (UH-EE)	earth, turban
ou	OW (AH-OO)	out, mouse
oi	Oi (AW-EE)	oil, coin
ă	Aee (A-EE)	thank, dangle

The SCHWA (pronounced **SHV-AH**), symbolized as Σ, represents the unstressed sound found in the 2nd syllable of "China", "pencil". Also found in the unstressed "er" of "teacher" and "paper".

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CONSONANTS

Our Symbol		Sample Word
KW		quick, quite
NG		sing, rang
KSH		luxury
Y		yes, your
KH		loch, ach
R		rice, run
W		wing, woman
WH		while, when
M		mother. mine
N		never, nonsense
L		letter, lovely
H		hungry, honey
J	(voiced)	judge, gelatin
CH	(unvoiced)	church, cheese
G	(v)	get, go
K	(unv)	cut, cat
GZ	(v)	exit, exert
KS	(unv)	tax, exite
ZH	(v)	azure
SH	(unv)	she, shun
V	(v)	vowel, vote
F	(unv)	frank, fort
TH	(v)	the, those
th	(unv)	thin, through
D	(v)	dim, done
T	(unv)	tin, ton
B	(v)	butter, bending
P	(unv)	putter, pending
Z	(v)	zeal, zone
S	(unv)	seal, sewn

The following listing of both vowels and consonants represents the outstanding problems in your pronunciation of English. The right-hand column displays the very heart of your pronunciation problems; the left-hand column the keys to the solution. You will be well on your way toward the mastery of American-English as soon as you develop the habit of using the left-hand examples in your spontaneous, everyday speech.

First you will have to listen to my taped demonstration of the American sound, then practice it yourself on your own recorder until you feel that you have come close to the correct pronunciation. At the risk of appearing as though I am oversimplifying, I must remind you that all of your vowel and consonant pronunciation problems are pointed out in the innocent-looking list to follow and the short, but intensive, tape that accompanies it. As soon as you conquer these problems, you shall be well on your way to success. Bon Voyage!

ASHKENAZI VOWEL CHANGES

American Sound		Israeli Sound	
Sound	**Example**	**Sound**	**Example**
A	that	EH	D-EH-T
	manage		M-EH-NƩJ
	fat		F-EH-T
AH	father	O	FODaR
	harbor		OBƩR
	sharp		SH-ORP

AY	break	No change	
	take		
	day		
AW	law	OH	L-OH
	caught		K-OH-T
	floor		FL-OH-R
EE	believe	I	BILIF
	feel		FIL
	people		PIPL
EH	bed	A	BAD
	met	or	MAT
	prefer	a	PRIFaR
a	chair	EH	CH-EH-R
	bare		B-EH-R
	care		K-EH-R
i	pit	EE	P-EE-T
	fill		F-EE-L
	live		L-EE-F
O	not	AW	N-AW-T
	proper		PR-AW-PaR
	bond		B-AW-NT
OO	school	oo	SK-oo-L
	food		F-oo-D
	stupid		ST-oo-P-EE-T
oo	took	OO	T-OO-K
	book		B-OO-K
	cooker		K-OO-KaR
yOO	pure	Y-oo	PY-oo-R
	beauty		BY-oo-TI
	cube		KY-oo-B
UH	nut	AW	N-AW-T
	mother	or	M-AW-DaR
	under	O	ONDaR
I	price	No change	
	cry		
	guile		
OH	don't	UH	D-UH-NT
	focus		F-UH-KƩS
	both		B-UH-T

u	earth	a	aRT
	worst		VaRST
	were		VaR
OW	scout	No change	
	mountain		
	doubtful		
OI	oil	UH-I	UH-IL
	boys		B-UH-IS
	loiter		L-UH-ITaR
Aee	bank	EH-EE	B-EH-EE-NK
	Yankee		Y-EH-EE-NK-EE
	spank		SP-EH-EE-NK

ASHKENAZI CONSONANT CHANGES

H— You have a strong tendency to drop the **H** sound at the beginning of words following consonants, as in the sentence, "There is a big hospital in New York harbor", which you tend to pronounce as **DaR EE-S a B-EE-G AW-SP-EE-T-AH-L EE-N Noo Y-OH-RK OBΣR**. Examples are **FIF AW-N-DRΣD** for "five hundred", and **IM Ti-CH-iNG iBR-oo DiS EE-R** for "I'm teaching Hebrew this year."

R— The Ashkenazi **R** is the same as the German guttural **R**. The Sephardic **R** is the same **R** as the Spanish and Italian **R**. In order to sound convincingly like an American, you must learn to pronounce the American **R**. Please listen to my pronunciation of the **R** throughout the rest of the course and practice, practice, practice. Actually, there are two variants of the Sephardic **R** sound: the **R** in the Arabic

word ***MUH*-RAH** ("woman") is sounded like the Spanish "pero". The **R** in another Arabic word **MUH-*RR*AH** ("time") is sounded like the Spanish "perro". But, from this point on, you must practice your **R**'s until they sound like the American **R**. It's **F-AH-TH-ΣR**, not **FODaR**.

T— In your zeal to read and speak English fastidiously and distinctly, you tend to go overboard in your production of this sound. The average American pronounces the words "battleship', "letter", "one at a time" as **BADL-SH-iP, L-EH-DΣR, W-UH-NADΣ TIM**; not **BATL-SH-iP, L-EH-T-EH-R, W-UH-N AT UH TIM**. Unless in front of a word, the American **T** is usually softened into a **D**, or a **T** quickly followed by an **H** shound, as sometimes heard in the words **L-EH-T-HΣ**, for "letter", or **B-EH-T-HΣ** for "better".

Y— Just as with the **H** sound, you often drop the **Y** at the beginning of some words. For example, for "this year", you often say **DiS EE-R**.

TH— You usually sound this as a **D**, as in **D-EE-S EE-S MI M-AW-DaR**. The **TH** sound is easily generated by sticking your tongue out between your upper & lower teeth & sounding your voice. Don't say **D-EH-T** for **TH-A-T**, or **DiS** for **TH-iS**. Don't say **D-EH T-AY-BL EE-TS RAD** for "The table is red".

th— Be careful of your tendency to convery this sound into a **T** sound, as in **I T-OH-T MI**

TOM VW-AW-S K-OH-T EE-N D-EH D-OH-R, for, "I thought my thumb was caught in the door".

V-W substitutions— Many Ashkenazis substitute **W** for **V** and, conversely, **V** for **W**. The word "vote" should be pronounced **V-OH-T**, not **W-UH-T**; "Washington" should be pronounced **W-AH-SH-EE-NGT-UH-N**, not **VO-SH-iNT-AW-N**.

Practice words for Ashkenazis:

filling — not: F-EE-L-EE-NG — ***FiL-EE-NG***
watch — not: W-UH-T-CH or V-UH-T-CH — ***WOT-CH***
family — not: F-EH-MΣLi — ***FAM*i-L-EE**
believe — not: BiLiV — **BΣ*L-EE-V***
lot — not: L-UH-T — ***LOT***
each — not: iT-CH — ***EE-CH***
won't — not: W-UH-NT — ***W-OH-NT***
what — not: W-AW-T — ***WH-OT***
father — not: FODaR — ***F-AH*-TH-ΣR**
year — not: EE-R — ***Y-EE-R***
hot — not: H-UH-T — ***HOT***
hospital — not: AW-SP-EE-T-AH-L — ***HOSP*iTΣL**
Hebrew — not: EE-BR-oo — ***H-EE-BR-OO***
master — not: M-AH-STaR — ***MAST*ΣR**
nut — not: N-AW-T — ***N-UH-T***
under — not: AW-NDaR — ***UH-N*DΣR**
feeling — not: FiL-EE-NG — ***F-EE*-L-EE-NG**
earth — not: aR-th — ***uR-th***

manage — not: M-EH-NΣ-CH — ***MANΣJ***

focus — not: F-UH-K-UH-S — ***F-OH-KΣS***

law — not: L-OH — ***L-AW***

don't — not: D-UH-NT — ***D-OH-NT***

Jack — not: CH-EH-K — ***JAK***

read— not: RiD (German **R**) — ***R-EE-D*** (American-English **R**)

thing — not: T-EE-NG — ***th-EE-NG***

art — not: O-RRR-T — ***AH-RT***

Spanish — not: SP-EH-N-EE-SH — ***SPANi-SH***

other — not: AW-DaR — ***UH-TH-EH-R***

small — not: SM-UH-L — ***SM-AW-L***

answer — not: AH-NSaR — ***ANSΣR***

Japanese — not: J-EH-P-AH-N-EE-Z — **JAPΣN-*EE-Z***

in order to — not: EE-N AW-DaR T-oo — **iN *AW-RD*ΣR T-OO**

papers — not: P-AY-PaRS — ***P-AY-PΣRZ***

talent — not: T-AH-L-EH-NT — ***TAL*ΣNT**

draw — not: DRR-OH (German **R**)— ***DR-AW*** (American-English **R**)

touch — not: TO-CH — **T-UH-CH**

to read a good book — not: TΣ RRiD AH G-OO-D B-OO-K — **T-OO R-EE-D Σ G-oo-D *B-oo-K***

deep — not: DiP — **D-EE-P**

blank — not: BL-EH-EE-NK — ***BL-Aee-NK***

reason — not: RRiZΣN — ***R-EE-ZΣN***

was — not: W-UH-Z — ***W-AH-Z***

that — not: D-EH-T — ***TH-AT***
teach — not: Ti-CH — ***T-EE-CH***

GLOTTAL STOPS (HAMZA) AND OTHER THROAT-GENERATED SOUNDS IN THE SEPHARDIC (ARABIC) ACCENT

The most obvious difference between spoken Arabic and spoken English is not to be found in your mispronunciation of English vowels and consonants, but in the glottal stop and other throat-generated sounds. Much of the Arabic language is made up of these sounds. The glottal stop, as you speakers of Arabic well know, is the quick catch in the throat placed before, between, or after many vowels. The following are examples of familiar Arabic words using glottal stops and a wide assortment of other throat grunts, symbolized in this course by a slash [/]:

/ahweh ("coffee"), ba/lahweh ("baklawa"), suu/ ("market")

The same glottal stop often appears in American-English at the beginning of words whose first letter is a vowel, when that word is sounded alone (not preceded by another word). For instance, the words "it", "even", and "open", when not preceded by another word and sounded alone, are almost always sounded with that quick catch in the throat at the start (the glottal stop). One exception to this rule: when "it", "even", "open", or any other word beginning with a vowel is preceded by the **UH** sound, a glottal stop is inserted between the **UH** and the word to follow, as in the sentences: "Ella/ is nice" or "Bring an umbrella/ and a raincoat" (**EH-LΣ/ iZ**

NIS or **BR-EE-NG AN UH-M-BR-EH-LΣ/ AND Σ R-AY-NK-OH-T**).

The foregoing examples illustrated most, if not all, the occasions when the glottal stop is used in American-English. A comfortable, but incorrect, way to avoid the glottal stops in the sentences we just examined, is to insert an **R** sound where the glottal stop is normally placed, for example: "Cuba'r and Jamaica'r are islands in the Carribean", "Ella'r is nice," or "Bring an umbrella'r and a raincoat" (**/EH-LΣ *R* iZ NIS** or **BR-EE-NG AN UH-M-BR-EH-LΣ *R* AND Σ R-AY-NK-OH-T**)

To sum up, whether preceded by a glottal stop (please keep in mind that a glottal stop is actually a consonant), an **R** sound, or any other consonant, all vowel sounds in American-English must begin with a consonant. Looking at all the vowel sounds in "/Ella/ is nice", for example, we see that the first **E** is preceded by a glottal stop which is, physiologically speaking, a consonant; the next vowel, **A**, is preceded by an **L**, a consonant; the **i** in "is" is preceded by a glottal stop, another consonant; the **i** in "nice" is preceded by the consonant **N**. There are no glottal stops in "The art of etching" because the **AH** sound of "art" is preceded by the **Y** consonant (physiologically speaking, a true consonant) sounded at the end of the word "the" (**TH-EE**), which provides an easy transition into the AH of "art" (**TH-EE Y-AH-RT Σ V-EH-TCH-EE-NG**).

But that is American-English. What about the Arabic accent? To begin with, we must first note that the consonant known commonly as the

glottal stop is used frequently in front of vowels in the Arabic language, a habit that you Arab speakers understandably carry over into English: For "I am", which in American-English is pronounced **I-YAM**; for "you are", which in American-English is pronounced **Yoo-W-AH-R**, Arabic speakers would say **Yoo/ AH-R**.

In order to sound convincingly like an American, you must forget your throat forever, an area of the vocal apparatus only used by Americans for breathing air, gargling mouth-wash, swallowing food and drink, and sounding those few examples I have just noted.

To continue, you speakers of Arabic also use your throats to produce sounds other than the glottal stop. The hissing **H** sound (symbolized here by an underline), produced by tightening the throat, is a common sound used in such Arabic words as **WAH-H-EH-D** ("one") and **AH-H-SAH-N** ("better"). This sound is not used in American-English.

Another use of the throat is the throat-straining deep vowel sound (symbolized here as a *) used in such Arabic words as ***AHRAHBEE** ("Arabic") and **NAH*AHM** ("yes"), another sound foreign to American-English.

Then there is that throat-generated consonant which we shall symbolize here as a **¥**, a voiced **KH** (see consonant symbols) used in such Arabic words as **¥AH-LEE** ("expensive") and **¥-UH-DAH** ("midday meal"). That sound, too, is never used in American-English.

One final caution: Please listen to, and become aware of, the explosive vowels in the

Arabic pronunciation of the following sentence: "If you are going on an errand, please pick me up an apple". The explosive force with which the words "if", "are", "errand", "up", and "apple" are uttered are typical identifiers of the Arabic speaker. Speakers of American-English glide into those words gently and easily, without explosive force.

To sum up this discussion on Sephardic throat sounds, the use of the throat must be discarded forever when speaking American-English.

While your primary goal in the course is the eradication of your Sephardic accent, you may also encounter occasional problems with the proper use of English grammar. Though the concern of the course is your accent, it would not be amiss at this point to remind you of a few common syntax and grammatic errors committed by you Israelis from Arabic-speaking countries:

I'm here already five year in America.

for

I have been in America five years.

• • •

Where you was?

for

Where were you?

• • •

Told me where I should go.

for

Tell me where to go.

• • •

Your mother she came here yesterday?
for
Did your mother arrive yesterday?

* * *

The people they are coming tomorrow.
for
The people are coming tomorrow.

* * *

He was take taxi to go in the store.
for
He took a taxi to the store.

* * *

SEPHARDIC VOWEL CHANGES

Note: From this point on, the slash [/] shall symbolize all undesirable Sephardic throat sounds.

American Sound		Israeli Sound	
Sound	**Example**	**Sound**	**Example**
AY	take break day	a	TaK BRaK DaY
AH	father harbor sharp	No change	
A	bad flat fast	Usually no change Sometimes AH as in G-AH-R-AH-NT-EE	
AW	caller falter water	No change	

EE	he treat people	**No change**	
EH	bed met red	**No change**	
a	chair bare care	**No change**	
i	bit sit differ	**No change**	
O	top copper bond	**No change**	
OO	spoon food stupid	**No change**	
oo	foot wolf soot	**No change**	
yOO	pure beauty cube	**No change**	
UH	alone final sofa	**Usually UH as in UH-ND-EH-R Sometimes A as in /A-NKL** (uncle)	
I	price cry guile	**AH-i**	**BR-AH-iS** **KR-AH-i-EE** **G-AH-iL**
OH	stone motor both	**AW**	**ST-AW-N** **M-AW-TR** **B-AW-T**
u	earn purple furnish	**UH**	**UH-RN** **P-UH-RPL** **F-UH-RNI-SH**

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OW	scout mountain doubtful	**No change**
OI	oil enjoy loiter	**No change**

SEPHARDIC CONSONANT CHANGES

Note: As with the vowels, your consonant changes are few. But don't let that fact mis-lead you. I must stress again that the prime ingredient of the Sephardic accent is to be found in your throat sounds.

CH— You often convert this sound into a **SH**, as in **SH-AH-R-L-EE SH-O-BLiN MaD a F-AW-R-SH-ΣN**, for Charlie Chaplin made a fortune".

L— Your **L** is always the clear ***L***, which I shall italicize here to identify it, found in the English words "lead" and "letter". But you must learn to pronounce the dark **L** of "Allah", as in the English words "deal", "feel", "hold". Listen to my recitation of your sound, then compare it to my pronunciation of the correct sound. For example: **H-EH-*L*P! H-EH-*L*P!** should sound like "Help!" "Help!". ***L*-EH-T M-EE AH-*L*-AW-N** should be pronounced as "Let me alone".

P— The **P** sound, borrowed by the Arabs from other languages, is rarely used in Arabic. For that reason, Sephardics have a tendency to change the English **P** into a **B**. You often convert "please" into **BL-EE-Z**.

R— The Sephardic **R** is the same **R** as the Spanish and Italian **R**. In order to sound convincingly like an American, you must learn to pronounce the American **R**. Please listen to my pronunciation of the **R** throughout the rest of the course and practice, practice, practice. Actually, there are two variants of the Sephardic **R** sound: the **R** in the Arabic word ***M-UH-R-AH*** ("woman") is sounded like the Spanish "pero". The **R** in another Arabic word **M–UH-*RR*-AH** ("time") is sounded like the Spanish "perro". But from this point on, you must practice your **R**'s until they sound like the American **R**.

T— In your zeal to read and speak English fastidiously and distinctly, you tend to go overboard in your production of this sound. The average American pronounces the words "battleship', "letter", "one at a time" as **BADL-SH-iP, L-EH-DΣR, W-UH-NADΣ TIM**; not **BA*T*L-SH-iP, L-EH-*T*-EH-R, W-UH-N A*T* UH TIM**. Unless in front of a word, the American **T** is usually softened into a **D**, or a **T** quickly followed by an **H** shound, as sometimes heard in the words **L-EH-T-HΣ**, for "letter", or **B-EH-T-HΣ** for "better".

TH— You usually sound this as a **D**, as in **D-AW-Z AH-R DΣ W-UH-NZ**, for **TH-OH-Z AH-R TH-Σ W-UH-NZ**, "Those are the ones".

th— Be careful of your tendency to convert this sound into a **T** sound, as in **TR-OO DΣ**

TiK OV HiZ T-UH-M, for "through the thick of his thumb".

V— Another consonant borrowed by the Arabs from other languages. Try to remember the **V** sound can be simply produced by adding your voice to the **F** sound. You have a tendency to sound it like a **B**, an **F**, and at times, the **BV** sound of Spanish.

* * * * * * *

PRACTICE WORDS FOR SEPHARDICS

Turn on your tape recorder and repeat each of the following after me in the silent spaces I have provided after each word. Record both my version and yours and compare the two. Keep practicing until you are satisfied with your pronunciation. If you have problems, do not despair. There are more exercises later in the course that should iron out your present difficulties.

Arab — not: /AH-R-AH-B — ***AR*ΣB**
guarantee — not: G-AH-R-AH-NT-EE — **GARΣNT-*EE***
insane — not inSaN — **iN*S-AY-N***
Spain — not SPaN — ***SP-AY-N***
jade — not JaD — ***J-AY-D***
airplane — not aRBLaN — ***aR*PL-AY-N**
umbrella — not AH-MBRaL-AH — **UH-M*BR-EH-*LΣ**
these — not D-EE-Z — ***TH-EE-Z***
those — not D-AW-Z — ***TH-OH-Z***
total — not T-AW-T-AH-L — ***T-OH-*DL**
thin — not TiN — **th-iN**

character — not K-AH-R-AH-KTΣR — ***KARΣKTΣR***

partial—not B-AH-R-SH-ΣL— ***P-AH-R-SH-ΣL***

fortune — not F-AW-R-SH-EN — ***F-AW-R-CH-ΣN***

water — not W-AW-TΣR — ***W-AW-DΣR***

polarize — not B-AW-L-AH-R(AH-i)Z — ***P-OH-LΣRIZ***

folk poem — not F-AW-K B-AW-M — ***F-OH-K P-OH-EH-M***

Baltimore — not B-AW-LT-EE-M-AW-R — ***B-AW-L-TΣ-M-AW-R***

ruin — not R-OO-N — ***R-OO-iN***

frown — not FR-OW-N (Spanish **R**)— ***FR-OW-N***

gas — not G-AH-Z — ***GAS***

earth — not /UH-RT — ***uR-th***

one — not W-AH-N — ***W-UH-N***

three — not TR-EE — ***th-R-EE***

four — not F-AW-R (Spanish **R**) — ***F-AW-R*** (American **R**)

six — not SKS — **SiKS** (short **i**)

eight — not aT — ***AY-T***

thirteen — not T-UH-RT-EE-N — **th-u-RT-EE-N**

twenty — not TW-UH-NT-EE — ***TW-EH-N*T-EE**

cheddar cheese — not SH-aDaR SH-EE-Z — ***CH-EH-DΣR CH-EE-Z***

1922 — not NANT-EE-N TW-UH-NT-EE T-OO — **NINT-EE-N TW-EH-NT-EE T-OO**

plastic — not BL-AH-STEEK — ***PLASTiK***

turkey — not T-UH-RK-EE — **TuRK-EE**

Palestinian people — not B-AH-LaST-EE-NY-AH-N B-EE-BL — **PAL-EH-*STiN*-EE-YΣN *P-EE-PL***

Lebanon — not L-EH-BNAN — ***L-EH-B*ΣN-AH-N**

principle — not BRiNSiBL — ***PRiN*SiPL**

if— not /iF (short, explosive i) — ***iF***

but — not BAT (explosive vowel) — ***B-UH-T***

Lawrence of Arabia — not ΣL-AW-RaNS iBN /AH-R-AH-B — ***L-AW-R-*ΣNS ΣV Σ-*R-AY*-B-EE-Σ**

tell — not T-EH-L (explosive T, light L) — ***T-EH-L***

fill — not FiL (with a light L) — ***FiL***

flow — not FL-AW (light L) — **FL-OH**

floor — not FL-AW-R (light L) — **FL-AW-R**

style — not STIL (explosive light L) — **STIL**

simple — not SiMBL — **SiMPΣL**

please — not BL-EE-Z — **PL-EE-Z**

pronounce — not BR-AW-N-OW-NS — **PR-OH-*N-OW-NS***

printout — not BRiND-OW-D — ***PRiNT*-OW-T**

explain — not aGZBLaN — **EH-KS-*PL-AY-N***

prominence — not BR-AW-M-EE-N-AH-NS — ***PR-O-Mi*N-ΣNS**

prolific — not BR-AW-LiFiK — **PR-OH-*LiFiK***
eminence — not aM-EE-NaNS — ***EH*-MiN-ΣNS**
unsettled — not AH-NS-EH-TiLD (explosive T, light L) — **UH-N-*S-EH-T*LD**
fried rice — not FR(AH-i)D R(AH-i)Z — **FRID RIS**
although — not AW-L-D-AW — **AW-L-*TH-OH***
thus — not D-UH-S — **TH-UH-S**
wheelbarrow — not W-EE-LB-AH-R-AW — ***WH-EE-L*B-A-R-OH**
embellish — not /EH-MB-UH-LΣ-SH — **EH-M*B-EH-L*Σ-SH**
early — not /uRL-EE — ***uRL*-EE**
reverse — not R-EE-V-UH-RS — **R-EE-*VuRS***

VOWEL PRACTICE for Ashkenazis & Sephardics

Turn on your tape recorder and repeat each of the following after me in the silent spaces I have provided after each word. Record both my version and yours and compare the two. Keep practicing until you are satisfied with your pronunciation. If you have problems, do not despair. There are more exercises later in the course that should iron out your present difficulties.

insane — **iNS-AY-N**
Spain — **SP-AY-N**
jade — **J-AY-D**

airplane — **aRPL-AY-N**

umbrella — **UH-MBR-EH-L-Σ**

understand — **UH-N-D-ΣR-STAND**

exactly — **EH-GZ-AKTL-EE**

character — **KARΣKTΣR**

partial — **P-AH-R-SH-ΣL**

larder — **L-AH-RDΣR**

fortune — **F-AW-R-CH-ΣN**

mortify — **M-AW-R-TΣFI**

redeem — **R-EE-D-EE-M**

water wheel — **WAW-TΣR WH-EE-L**

Ireland — **IRLΣND**

timely — **TIML-EE**

rodeo — **R-OH-D-EE-OH** or
R-OH-D-AY-OH

polarize — **P-OH-LΣR-IZ**

folk poem — **F-OH-K P-OH-EH-M**

Baltimore — **B-AW-L-TΣM-AW-R**

falsify — **F-AW-LSiFI**

boondoggle — **B-OO-NDOGL**

ruin — **R-OO-iN**

Moorish — **M-OO-Ri-SH**

beauty — **B-yOO-T-EE**

municipal — **M-yOO-Ni-Si-PΣL**

ubiquitous — **yOO-Bi-KWiTΣS**

frown — **FR-OW-N**

roundabout — **R-OW-NDΣB-OW-T**

prowess — **PR-OW-EHS**

CONSONANT PRACTICE

flow — **FL-OH**
floor — **FL-AW-R**
style — **STIL**
simple — **SiMPΣL**
please — **PL-EE-Z**
pronounce — **PR-OH-N-OW-NS**
printout — **PRiNT-OW-T**
probably — **PR-O-BΣBL-EE**
explain — **E-KSPL-AY-N**
volume — **V-O-L-yOO-M**
prominence — **PR-O-MiN-ΣNS**
prolific — **PR-OH-LiFiK**
eminence — **EH-MiNΣNS**
unsettled — **UHN-S-EH-TLD**
ounces — **OW-NSΣZ**
cluster — **KL-UH-STΣR**
insatiable — **iN-SAY-SH-ΣBL**
splash — **SPLA-SH**
fried rice — **FRID RIS**
those — **TH-OH-Z**
thin — **th-iN**
although — **AW-L-TH-OH**
thus — **TH-UH-S**
clinic — **KLiNiK**
wheelbarrow — **WH-EE-LBAR-OH**
embellish — **EH-MB-EH-LΣ-SH**
aluminum — **UHL-yOO-MiNΣM**
platinum — **PLATiNΣM**
newer — **N-yOO-WΣR**
fewer — **F-yOO-WΣR**
plastic — **PLASTiK**
boiling onions — **B-OY-L-EE-NG U H - N - Y Σ N S**
early — **uRL-EE**

reverse — **R-EE-VuRS**
fifteen — **FiFT-EE-N**
example — **EH-GZAMPƩL**
thousands — **th-OW-ZƩNDZ**

Now that we are aware of our trouble spots, let us begin to apply what we've learned. After a few practice sessions, you will learn to imitate the correct sounds of the following sentences, slowly, but correctly. Your next step toward success will come when you begin to self-monitor and self-correct your spontaneous speech in your daily interrelationships with other English speakers.

After a period of time — which varies with different students — you will arrive at your final goal: the automatic, self-correcting production of standard American-English, as you automatically (without seeming effort) monitor and self-correct your everyday speech.

Please read each of the following sentences aloud, one at a time, after listening carefully to the tape demonstration. Stop the tape after each sentence, and practice until you feel you have come close to correct pronunciation. Then record both my version and yours on your own tape recorder. You now have a record of your progress up to this point.

Later, repeat my recitations, this time without reading the text. When you have attained a fair degree of fidelity, memorize and recite some of the sentences to your family and friends. You will be pleasantly surprised at their response, which should further reinforce your new habits of speech. Remember, we must be patient and allow time to pass. Eventually you will find your

new habits spreading to formerly-unfamiliar words.

VOWEL EXERCISES

This lesson should be practiced and practiced until you have considerably narrowed the difference between your recitation and mine.

AY (EH-EE)

That jewel is not jade — it's fake. It's only painted that color.

It's shameful to place the blame on Mame.

Kay weighed the paint before making the sale.

Headaches and backaches and earaches and toothaches can cause much pain.

The parade turned out to be an insane charade.

Dave and Mabel took a plane from Maine to the Ukraine.

The renegades on the barricade slaked their thirst with pails of orangeade and lemonade.

Waiter! Take away this pastry. You may change it for a plate of plain date cake.

AH

The Taj Mahal is not located in Guam or Iran **(EE-R-AH-N)**

There are few skylarks and woodlarks in Denmark.

If you begin your journey in Washington, D.C., you can hardly miss Panama on the way to Bogotá.

Kindhearted, chicken-hearted, broken-hearted Martin bartered a Bartlett pear for Charlie's dark barley.

A

The dancing master ran to Mack's stand for a ham sandwich.

The bad man sat on my black hat, so I grabbed his tan cap and ran.

The diplomat dispatched to Leningrad was an osteopath from Trinidad.

The next Olympiad featuring orangutan track events could take place in Yucatán, Pakistan, or Afghanistan.

Diana and Hannah exported their Havana bananas to Montana, Louisiana, Indiana, and Guiana.

AW

Morse, the lovelorn Norse, played a French horn on the North rim of the Matterhorn.

Four haughty horses and a naughty Macaw were born in a Montreal hallway during and awful thunderstorm.

Mortimer drank alcohol and water highballs at the free-for-all softball game.

Archibald crawled and called from the stone-walled vault.

EE

Apathy, empathy, sympathy, and dyspathy were each bittersweetly displayed by the evil King Lear.

Chinese, Japanese, Cantonese, Pekinese, and Burmese are as different from each other as Portuguese is from Singhalese.

Marguerite treated Peter to discreet meals of buckwheat,mincemeat, and sweetmeats.

EH

For breakfast she spread jelly and cheddar cheese on bread, fed Jerry, then went to bed again.

Ed met a terrible yellow leopard when he went to Anabelle's French hotel.

Blockheads and boneheads and deadheads and hotheads fell together when Spence spread his deadly message.

yOO

Madame Curie of Munich knew that Hugh's abusive mule needed a manicure.

We must not assume that bugle-blowing Tunisians always play pure Arabic music.

Nude, beautiful Eunice played the ukulele in her new costume while traveling from New York to the Ukraine.

O

Scott jogged and plodded in his sloppy togs through the hot Bronx streets.

Suzy Wong hobbled through the honky-tonks of Hong Kong looking for Scott, her mah-jongg partner.

Doc knocked the bottle of Scotch off the ice-box shelf and mixed himself a hot toddy.

oo

The swift-footed crook hooked the wooden cookbook.

A good-looking Chinook woman put a cookie in her pocketbook.

I relaized, after I took a good look, that I should have stood firm.

i

Jump in quickly while I give you a lift to Vilna.

Tim ripped the skin on his shin when he slid down the hill.

The winebibbing Gypsy grinned as he sipped a bit of sticky gin.

Bill implied that English was a rich source of silly idioms.

Mrs. Wiggs of Brazil nipped the infant's bib after the strong-willed shrimp dribbled his milk all over his crib.

OO

Lewis missed his tutor at school because his tooth was loose.

Luther claimed that Boole was too poor to attend Santa Cruz College.

Rube Bloomberg concluded that Calhoun was too poor to own a bassoon.

There is no sight loonier than a balloonful of prune-fed baboons spooning under the moon.

UH

Uncle munched a bunch on onions as he scrunched under Gunther's umbrella.

The sun comes up like thunder once a month in Tundra country.

I hunger for those seductive Hungarian Sunday suppers that Mother once served.

Those who study voltage and currents understand the meanings of the terms "inductance", "conductance", and "reluctance".

I (AH-EE)

Clyde tried to fight his way through nine miles of senile reptiles on the Nile.

Simon denied that there will be pie in the sky when he dies.

OH (UH-OO)

Zola Cohen munched on a smoked Polish sausage and Gorgonzola while bowling in Pensacola.

Rhoda Dolan dozed while rowing her boat in the ferocious, precocious ocean.

Viola O'Neill broke her crayola while holding a bowl full of baloney and macaroni.

u (UH-EE)

The purple turban was purchased by a Persian merchant for thirty pearls.

Bert learned that he earned more in Lucerne than Gert did in Berne.

I have heard that all birth, from cutworms to pachyderms, returns to the earth.

OW (AH-OO)

In an hour, Howard, the loudmouthed scout with the gout, will return to the clubhouse.

Sam Howe clowned on the crowded Greyhound bus from Foochow to Moscow.

I was dumbfounded and astounded as I watched the proud scow run aground loaded with flounders.

Oi (AW-EE)

Roy parboiled, soft-boiled, and hard-boiled the eggs in a wok full of soy oil.

Boyle pointed out the Rolls Royce that Joyce foisted on the boy from Illinois.

Batboys, cowboys, and playboys are to be found among the hoi polloi of Troy and Des Moines.

Aee (A-EE)

Frank, the mountebank, handed Hank a blank check.

You may deposit your francs at the swanky savings bank on the riverbank.

The pranky crank was spanked by the lanky Yank on the shank of the clanky gangplank.

a

Mr. Dare bought a pair of rare mores.

Carefree David planned an airplane trip to Delaware.

Mabel brushed her hair, grabbed a pair of pants, paid her fare, and prepared to travel to we know not where.

Let us review the sounds of American-English once again — first a few difficult vowels, then some troublesome consonants, singly and combined — this time in more detail. Please repeat each recitation after me, in the silent spaces I have provided. Record both your version and mine. When you are through, compare the two. *Do not proceed with the course until you are satisfied with your performance.*

AY as in	jade paint lemonade
AH	wash barter start
A	bad black sandwich
AW	horn crawl stonewall
EE	feeling, leaving, believe
a	prepare, fairgrounds, airplane
I	until, knit, risk
O	constant, propaganda, politics
oo	would, book, Hollywood
yOO	uniform, beautiful, computer
EH	leopard bread together
OO	school bassoon prune
UH	thunder Hungarian supper
I(AH-EE)	reptile Simon senile
OH (UH-OO)	smoke precocious doze
u (UH-EE)	purple learn birth

OW(AH-OO)	clubhouse proud flounder
Oi(AW-EE)	parboil Illinois pointed
Aee (A-EE)	blank spank cranky

Now for the consonants:

FL	flutter Florida flood
BL	bland blood problem
PL	plaster pleasant explode
SL	sleek slander reslotted
L	let, mellow, milk
P	pull petal perfect
PR	practice pronounce precedent
CL	clean clinic nuclear
TR	train transfer attract
Fyoo	fewer futile fumigate
Lyoo	aluminum allude luminous
TH	those that this
th	earth thin throw
H	herringbone, hold, helpless
J	agile, Jackson, jump
Q	quote, quite, quickly
S	cigar, sunshine, steel
V	vodka, violet, vinegar
W	wagon, world, wisdom
CH	Chernobyl child cheese
Tyoo	Tuesday substitute attune
SH	essential insatiable initial

BR	brilliant library February
NG	sing tongue Hong Kong
B	stab fib hub
D	broad bladder sound
K	exercise axiom acclaim
N	neat, near, name
R	frost teacher impress
T	fast assort blast
GZ	exert examine exactly
Z	zebra zoologist easy

VOWEL DIFFERENTIATION

The **A** sound of American-English could be quite difficult for speakers from Israel, who tend to pronounce it as **EH**. In order to learn to sharply differentiate between the two, it is important that you repeat the following word pairs, and the sentences that follow, after me, carefully comparing your pronunciation with mine. I shall provide a silent space between each recitation so that you can repeat and compare.

bed	**bad**	**kettle**	**cattle**
Meg	**mag**	**wreck**	**rack**
Rhett	**rat**	**pest**	**past**
Edison	**Addison**	**fester**	**faster**
pen	**pan**	**peck**	**pack**
neck	**knack**	**lest**	**last**
Beth	**bath**	**Becker**	**backer**

Rhett was the pest who sat on Addison's neck.

The bad boy slept in Harry's bed.

Edison invented the gramaphone, not the telegraph.

Tell Jerry that Hal can't pack his medicine.

Max and Meg snacked on black bread and eggs.

Crafty Ben zigzagged to the edge of the craggy flat.

Queen Mab bagged a cab to French Quebec.

The sexy Czech kissed his aunt's neck in Afghanistan.

Abraham the rebel tracked Ed to a Halifax cul-de-sac.

Celeste and Cal spent the weekend in Trinidad and Leningrad.

The following vowel differentiation exercise will cure your tendency to confuse OO with oo.

look	Luke	wood	wooed
full	fool	could	cooed
pull	pool	bull	Boole
soot	suit	hood	who'd
should	shoe'd	cookie	kooky

Look Luke! Don't put your foot in the woman's boot.

The rueful fools drank their full of the good soup.

Let's pull the crooked poodle out of the nudist's pool.

Buddhists should shoe their pussy-footed hooves in the Yankee Doodle room.

Junior wooed six-foot Louise in the bramblewood bush.

The Chinook woman could coo like a furious pullet.

Luther claimed that Boole's law was full of bull.

Tootsie Bloomberg was the hood who'd concluded that his couscous was cooked.

Kooky kangaroo cookies crumble crudely.

The **i** sound of American-English could be quite difficult for speakers of Hebrew, who tend to pronounce it as **EE**. And conversely, **EE** is often mispronounced as **i**. In order to learn to sharply differentiate between the two, it is important that you repeat the following word-pairs, and the sentences that follow, after me.

team	tim	sheen	shin
Jean	gin	bleep	blip
ease	is	each	itch
reek	Rick	teal	till
ream	rim	seal	sill
cheat	chit	heed	hid
leave	live	feet	fit
eel	ill	eat	it
peach	pitch	beat	bit
meat	knit	seat	sit

Tim's team eked out a slim victory.

Jean keeps her gin in Pete Smith's bin.

Peter eases his itch with Gleason's pills.

Rick's kitchen reeks with inedible leeks.

We can fix each tire by reaming the rim.

Would it be cheating if I treated the chit cheaply?

I intend to begin living when I leave this evening.

Never eat an ill eel.

Peter imbibed a pitcher of peach juice.

Imogene's knitting is easily the neatest in the institute.

See the sheen on Chip's oiled shins.

The bleeps will be indicated by instant blips on the video screen.

Beatrice wheezes with discomfort each time her skin itches.

The green-winged teal drifted on the river till feeding time.

The window sill was sealed with wheat filler.

Please heed his bid to remain hidden.

Be sure that the shoe fits your feet.

It remains to be seen if the beans will be eaten.

Fields was beaten bit by bit by Reese's skillful hitting.

Phillip would not sit in the cheaper seats.

The phrases to follow are clearly absurd and nonsensical. Repeat after me, line for line:

Be oblong, be bloated, be blase.

Be tasteless, be rude, be multitudinous.

Live in a swamp and be three-dimensional.

Go into a coffeeroom closet and suck eggs.

Now let us practice differentiating between **OH** and **AW**. Repeat these sentences after me:

Moribund gophers ride baroque horses.

Morton, the phoney saxaphonist, poured water into his baritone horn.

Will the folks in the auditorium please focus their eyes on Horace?

* * * * * * *

If you have been carefully monitoring yourself up to this point in the course, your spontaneous speech, as well as your studied readings, should be showing a vast improvement. If not, I would suggest that you stop at this point and review. Do not proceed until you sound almost letter-perfect to your ear, then continue to move forward by repeating the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address after me, piece-by-piece. I shall recite it through once, then piece-by-piece for you to repeat. After three or four recitations, please do your best to memorize the entire speech. It is not as difficult as it may appear.

The Gettysburg Address was delivered by Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863 at the dedication of the national cemetery on the Civil War battlefield of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great Civil War, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here

gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Now, I want you to listen to, and repeat, each segment of the speech after me. Note that I shall lay special stress on the possible problem areas as italicized in the text. Do not move on until you have thoroughly practiced each segment. Then recite the whole address from memory until you are satisfied. Record your final, polished version.

Note: I have italicized the Ashkenazi problem words and capitalized the Sephardic problem words.

Segment 1: **Four score and seven *years* ago our *fathers* brought forth on THIS continent, a new NATION, *conceived* in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that ALL men are created equal. Now we ARE engaged in a great Civil War, testing whether *that* nation or any nation so conceived and so *dedicated*, can long endure. We are met on a *great* battlefield of *that* war.**

Segment 2: **We *have come* to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for *those* who *here* GAVE their lives that *that* nation might *live*. It is altogether FITTING and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we can *not* DEDICATE — we can *not* consecrate — we can not *hallow* — *this* ground.**

Segment 3: **The BRAVE men, *living* and dead, who struggled *here*, have consecrated it, far above our poor *power* to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long *remember* what we say HERE, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the *living*, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which THEY who fought *here have* thus far so nobly advanced.**

Segment 4: **It is rather for *us* to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from THESE honored dead we TAKE *increased* devotion to that cause for which they GAVE the *last* full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall *not* have died in VAIN**

Segment 5: **— that this NATION, under God, shall have a new *birth* of freedom — and that *government* of the *people*, by the *people*, for the *people*, shall not perish from the *earth*.**

* * * * * * *

English spelling, you must know by know, is one of the main reasons for your confusion in the production of American speech sounds. Why? Many years ago the Phoenicians devised a written alphabet that represented all of the sounds of their language. One symbol stood for one sound, and no other.

The Greeks modified the Phoenician alphabet to fit their own language. Then the Romans took it over, but failed to modify the Greek alphabet to represent Roman speech. When the Roman alphabet reached England, there was still more confusion added, with the written alphabet representing the sounds of speech even less than it did under the Roman. Up to the time of the invention of printing, there was a large degree of variation permitted in the spelling, but the

widespread use of print finally standardized the spelling of words.

By this time, written English bore little relationship to the sounds of the language. Let us examine a small portion of the illogic that we have inherited today. For example: The sound of **EE** in "believe", "receive", "Phoebe", "amoeba", "aegis", "key", and in the word "quay" (pronounced **K-EE**). Those words present a good example of a single sound, **EE**, represented by a variety of spellings.

Another example is offered in the spelling of words ending in the letters *o-u-g-h*, as in "dough", "enough", "through", "cough", each sounded differently. How about the **SH** in "sure", "ocean", "station", "Charlotte"? Or the letters that are never sounded, as the **B** in "thumb", the **P** in "pneumonia", the **G** in "phlegm", the **L** in "talk", the **K** in "knave", the **T** in "often", and all those **E**'s in words such as "love", "make", "store", etc.?

I could go on and on with the homonyms — words that are spelled differently but pronounced the same — for example: "bear" and "bare", and the words spelled the same but pronounced differently, as in "tear" (cry) and "tear" (rip), and "read" (present) and "read" (past).

Notice, also, the way the sound of the letter ***a*** changes in the following words: "bare", "large", "woman", "bat", "rage", and "fall". Look at the strange variation of ***s*** which sometimes sounds like **S** and other times **Z** as in "easy" (**Z**), "pass" (**S**), "bags" (**Z**) "his" (**Z**), "us" (**S**). All of the illogic and inconsistencies of American English will become less confusing to you as you

continue to speak and practice, and use the language in your daily business and social life.

We should, at this point, take one more look at the important sound of **UH**, the most often-heard sound in American English. Because it does not exist in the Ashkenazi pronunciation, and it is often produced as a glottal stop by the Sephardics, it is particularly difficult for Israelis to hear and pronounce. To add to the confusion, it is the sound of most unstressed vowels and many combinations of vowels and consonants; in this course that unstressed sound is represented by the *schwa*, or Σ.

Here are some practice words containing that sound, contrasted with words that are often confused with it. Repeat each pair after me, in the silent space I have allowed. Compare your sound with mine, and keep practicing until perfect. Or as close to perfect as you can come.

cub	**cob (AH)**	**mud**	**mod (O)**
bus	**boss (AW)**	**tut**	**tot (O)**
gun	**gone (AH)**	**sub**	**sob (AH)**
won	**wan (AH)**	**cup**	**cop (O)**
	fun	**fawn (AW)**	

The following is the **UH** sound as it appears in the initial, the medial, and the final position of a few words:

1st syllable	2nd syllable	3rd syllable
affair	able	medium
account	animal	develop
lunch	human	betrayal
supper	soften	Montana
again	ballad	example

* * * * *

The following combines a number of problem sounds for both Ashkenazis and Sephardics. I will read the whole thing through. Then you must replay my recitation at least three times, each time repeating after me. Please memorize the short piece and recite it out loud to yourself and others, until you (and, of course, *they)* are satisfied with your recitation.

When I was (Z) young (UH), I pitied (i) the old. Now old (OH), it is the young I pity (i).

In his eighty-eighth year, Dr. Yousef Ben Zvi is (Z) even more energetic and vital than he was at 56, when he first began to enrich (i) my life.

He continues (Σ) to write and teach and lecture. Although he has long since passed the mandatory (A) retirement age for professors at the college of medicine at the university, he is still there, still active. Special dispensations have been made for him, new titles invented, loopholes found. The fact (A) is that he is indispensable — an institution within (i) an institution, without which it would be dangerously diminished.

So he tears about town, making daily visits to the clinics, as he has (A) done (UH) for over sixty years; and conducts (UH) his seminars, the most popular (O) in the history of the university.

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He rises (Z) at dawn each morning and goes to work on whichever of his two books in progress (O) strikes his fancy. The first is a comprehensive (O) work on Pavlov, with whom he was once (UH) associated. The second, an autobiography. During the past four years, he has made three round trips to China, and is (Z) planning another. He consults regularly with the psychiatric division of the college (O) on a long-range project involving (O) the interrelationship between psychology and physiology. He serves as mentor and invaluable friend to a variety of individuals all over the United States.

He is (Z) a perfect example of his own theories on the subject (UH) of age (J) and aging (J), life and death.

I once asked for his views on death.

"Oh, I don't mind the idea at all," he replied. "I'm quite resigned (Z) to death, but — but just not (O) today!"

Now let's talk about *reciprocal assimilation.* Please don't let that term frighten you — it simply refers to the tendency of those who speak English to reduce unstressed vowels to a barely audible schwa, or Σ, sound. In Israel you are taught to respect and enunciate each and every vowel; the reverse is true in English. As strange as it may sound, you will be better understood if you learn to overstress accented vowels of words and reduce the remaining vowels to a schwa.

Some good examples of that are offered by the words "attempt" (**ΣT-EH-MPT**) and "contain"

(**KΣNT-AY-N**). If you carefully stressed each vowel in those words you would have said **A-TEMPT** and **K-O-NT-AY-N**, the pronunciation of which are correct, but decidedly not American-English. Reciprocal assimilation also affects consonants when they are influenced by neighboring sounds. All of this is natural, as your organs of speech tend to take the easiest route through a word, for the purpose of saving time and energy. Say **PiK-CH-UH-R** rather than the precise **PiKTY-OO-R**; **N-AY-CH-ΣR** instead of **N-AY-TY-OO-R**; **LiT-EH-RΣ-CH-EH-R** rather than **LiT-EH-R-UH-TY-OO-R**; **EH-J-OO-K-AY-T** instead of **EH-DY-OO-K-AY-T**.

I must also emphasize that English is spoken in phrases rather than in words. And reciprocal assimilation occurs in those phrases as well as in individual words. Examples: **DiDJ-UH G-OH?** for "Did you go?" **D-OH-NCH-UH N-OH I KΣN SWiM?** for "Don't you know I can swim?" To get a feel of how Americans speak English, please repeat after me:

I love Russian literature.

Did you go to the store yesterday?

Don't you realize that education is important?

If I'm moving too fast for you in the recitation of the rules of good American English, please stop to absorb and practice each rule before moving on to the following two rules which govern the music of American-English sentences:

Rule 1: Most statements and commands in English end with a downward glide of the voice on the last *accented* syllable (not the last syllable, but the last *accented* syllable). This is known as Falling Intonation: Example: "The man is *crazy*." ***CRA*** is the last accented syllable. Note how the music of the sentence falls on the ***CRA*** .

Rule 2: Most statements indicating doubt or incompleteness — especially questions — end with an upward glide of the voice on the last *accented* syllable. This is known as Rising Intonation. Example: "Is she planning a *trip?*" ***TRIP*** is the last accented syllable. Note how the music of the sentence rises on ***TRIP***.

It appears that everything you have learned in this course regarding precise pronunciation must now be forgotten in order to master the casual sounds of standard American speech. To fully understand that point, recite the following short phrases by blending words together to form a single unit; in other words, recite each phrase as if it were a single word. While doing that, stress the italicized syllable strongly, so that the remaining vowels in the phrase fade away to almost complete obscurity.

A *won*derful life (Σ *W-UH-ND*ΣFΣLIF)

Did you *locate* it? (DiDYΣ-L-OH-K-AY-T-iT?)

***Think* of something. (th-EE-NK-ΣV S-UH-M-th-EE-NG)**

***Cash* a check. (KA-SH-Σ-CH-EH-K)**

To kill a mockingbird. (T-OO-KiL Σ MOK-EE-NGBuRD)

Repeat each of the following quotations, taken from *"Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?"*, after me, in the blank spaces I have provided. Let's try for speed this time. Note where I have laid the stresses in each quotation. You may choose to stress the quotations differently. If so, please feel free to do so, and note that the intent and meaning may change with your interpretation.

All great truths begin as blasphemies.

Reflect on the works of anthropoligists, whose concern is the evolution and behavior of groups of people and cultures; their customs, mores, lifestyles, and religions. Expose your children to this subject in their early, formative years.

Inquire into the teachings of Charles Darwin. Immerse yourself in the study of your relationship to all other life forms on this planet. Learn how we originated, how we developed, how the selection process works, and about the process of mutations.

There has never been a planned city in the history of our planet, but public interest in the field is increasing daily as the citizens of our decaying cities become more concerned with the future quality of their lives.

Total cities have to be designed in America, not by architects expressing their creativity on a building-by-building basis, but by city planners skilled in the design of man-machine systems.

A stroll through the city of tomorrow would take us through flora and parks where children will be seen playing. We would see cultural centers featuring large areas devoted to the arts and music, with people attending these attractions without payment or tickets of any kind. What would be startling to a person of today would be the sparse population and the strange silence over the city.

Since the planned cities of tomorrow will be radial, there will be radial conveyors to move people to and from the central core to the outer ring, and circular conveyors to transport them around each ring. As the radial conveyors carry a person outward, he would pass over crystal clear lakes and streams, and through forests of flowers and dark greenery.

The new technology would startle today's person. Giant production centers, operated by a social integrator, will silently form and shape all the products required for human needs. Voice-actuated devices of all sorts will act as electronic slaves for all citizens. The new leisure will allow people to spend most of their time in education, travel, and adventure.

Symposiums on world affairs will be held at vast domed centers designed to house super-intelligent computers with three-dimensional displays. The control centers will be capable of making optimum deci-

sions on billions of simultaneous events in fractions of a second.

Time has no respect for individuals or cultures. The bio-social forces that shape the future are lawful. The future, like the present, is the result of the primary forces of the space-time continuum.

It is happening. It is important that we be ready for it.

If you feel that your rate of speech is a little fast, here is an exercise that should slow you down. Read the following sentence at your normal rate, but insert the number one between each word:

She (one) is (one) going (one) to (one) the (one) movies (one) today.

Now repeat the exercise, but this time do not recite the number one out loud, but "think" it. It may feel a bit frustrating, but if you tenaciously practice a few random sentences like these for an hour a day, you definitely will modify your old behavior patterns. It takes patience and work, but you will succeed in becoming a slower, more deliberate, speaker, with the added bonus of more authority in your voice.

If your speech rate is too slow, time yourself while reading the following sentence. Then read it again against the clock. Don't worry about a little bit of sloppiness. If at first you took fifty seconds to read, see if you can achieve it in thirty-five seconds. This exercise should raise your awareness of the differences in speech rate.

Here is a good paragraph for increasing your rate:

To become a "perfect" person it is currently the fashion to get in touch with your feelings. Also, it is imperative that you scream, encounter, rolf, meditate, follow your stars, let it all hang out, lay back, and desensitize yourself. And on top of it all, you had better keep up with the endless flow of How To — books, with titles such as *How to Soothe Your Shattered Nerves, How To Be Free in an Uptight World, and How To Let Your Neurosis Work For You.*

You have surely noticed by now that our readings have become more than mere word exercises. They deal now with ideas — about science, technology, and the future. For the purpose of the course, whether you agree or not with the premise presented is not important. What is important to you is that you are learning to express ideas, forcibly and convincingly.

Here is a short discussion on the scientific method, also taken from *"Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?"*, which I want you to read into your tape recorder as if you were addressing a large audience. Then compare your recitation with mine. I have italicized those portions which I feel should be emphasized.

The scientific method is no secret, *wherever it is applied it will work.* The Soviet Union, China, and Japan are proving *just as capable* of using science as we in the West. With the proper personnel

and research facilities, whether the efforts are *Russian, American, African, Indonesian, or any other,* it will produce results. There is no magic formula to science and there are *no secrets being stolen* by the Russians and other "backward" peoples. We like to think that spies and traitors are stealing our secrets, but the knowledge of science is *international* and the techniques to produce super-bombs is *known by many nations* of the earth today.

Scientists and engineers in the Orient are attaining the high degree of social recognition and income that in America is given to actors, politicians, and business people. There is also in America an anti-intellectualism that generates *contempt* for scientists. Most scientists become captive to some private company so that they can be exploited to design products of obsolescence at the highest profit rate possible. If they are not captured by a private corporation, they are made subject to investigations, loyalty oaths, and questions regarding their lifestyle and philosophy. The laboratories of giant multicorporations are *well-equipped;* independent researchers could never possibly afford the funds and the facilities to do research as in the captive mode.

Respect for science by the younger generation is rapidly diminished by the distorted view of scientists presented in

Hollywood movies, TV, and the science fiction literature which is *all fiction and little science.* In the movies scientists spend most of their time in labs rubbing their hands and staring with bulging eyeballs, surrounded by electronic gadgets, from high-voltage condensers discharging static sparks to computer read-outs making "futuristic" noise.

Most lay people have only *a hazy notion* of what research scientists do. Scientists are often *social,* even *gregarious,* beings. The world of science is a place of *intelligence* and *ambition,* of people who want to do well at their work and be respected by their peers for it. In that respect, they are much like the rest of us. But the stakes in scientific research are *high,* and the rewards can be *greater.* And in a world of job dissatisfaction, they appear to enjoy their work, where they are usually engaged in the humdrum work of checking, measuring, and acquiring information related to the quantities and qualities of phenomena.

In chemistry, much of the work is rote in purifying materials, checking spectra, breaking down chemicals, synthesizing new ones, deducing molecular structures, and blending substances into mixtures with special properties. In astronomy, most of it involves sky-mapping with the use of optical and radio telescopes. Physics is a lot of tedious work, collecting data related

to sub-atomic particles and nuclear structures. Geologists are constantly accumulating data related to the structure, composition, and fossil content of rocks, and age-dating and recording geological histories. They are also involved in the study of metals, minerals, and fossil fuel deposits. As dull as it may appear, *this is the stuff from* which most scientific achievement is born.

Even if you don't agree with the premise of that last recitation, I want you to sound as if you do. It may take twenty tries until you can deliver it cleanly, with conviction and power. You must learn to become personally involved with *what* you say, as well as *how* you say it.

After you have achieved that, I would like to extend my congratulations on your brilliant achievement in hurdling all the obstacles I have set in your path up to now.

Yes, "*what* is said" may be more important than "*how* it is said" — that was the reason for assigning you the reading of the essay on the scientific method. But *what* is said always comes across more convincingly when it is skillfully communicated.

* * * * * *

Here are a few tongue-twisters, difficult even for the average American, so do not despair if you find them tough going at first. Stay with it until you get them right. I would suggest also that you memorize them — they can be very impressive to your friends and, as you shall see, quite difficult even for native Americans to

execute without a slip. The trick is to concentrate on *what* you're saying, not on the mechanics of slick articulation.

She stood on the balcony inexplicably mimicking him hiccuping and amicably welcoming him in.

Are you copper-bottoming 'em, my man? No'm, I'm aluminiuming (AL-yOO-*MiN*-EE-ΣM-EE-NG) 'em, mum.

The sixth shiek's sheep's sick.

Theophilus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb. Now, if Theophilus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of *his* thumb, see that thou, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust *not* three thousand thistles through the thick of *thy* thumb.

Please record those tongue-twisters on your own tape and compare them with mine.

* * * * * *

We have come to the end of the course. I want you to keep in mind that erasing your accent is a continuing process; you must assign at least an hour a day for practice. Now, as I bid you good-bye, I wish you the best of luck in your future undertakings.

Mazel Tov,
Jack Catran

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Jack Catran is a scientist with many years of experience. As a consultant to leading aerospace corporations, he participated in the Apollo program and other major U.S. space shots, where he specialized in the design of life support and man-machine systems. He has conducted extensive research on the use of computer-generated graphics in intelligence communication systems, automated teaching devices, and programmed learning. Language, phonics, and the science of verbal behavior has always interested him deeply. This book is a labor of love.

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